

3.
*God the Believer's best Strong-
hold in the worst Times.*

A
S E R M O N
P R E A C H E D
Upon the Preservation of
His M A J E S T Y ' S Person,
A N D T H E
Discovery of the late Plot of
the Intended Invasion.

By E D M U N D G O D W I N,
Rector of Cowley.

Deo confisi nunquam confusi.

L O N D O N,
Printed for Jonathan Robinson at the Golden
Lion in St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1696.

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God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
bold in the name of Jesus Christ.

MEMORIAL

PREACHED

Upon the Presentation of
This Memorial to the



AND THE
Discovery of the true
theological method.

BY EDWARD G. LUTHER,
Pastor of the Church of the Holy Spirit,
St. Louis, Mo.

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NEW YORK:
Published by the
Theological Library,
100 N. 3rd St.,
St. Louis, Mo.

To the Right Worshipful
Sir JONATHAN KEATE,
Knight and Baronet.

W *Hereas formerly there
bath been some pro-
mise of my coming
into your parts to preach, and to
pay my Respects to your Worship
for Kindnesses of old; when you,
and others with you, did largely
declare your Desire of having me
your Minister at Paul's Walden:
I should readily have accepted of
your Kindnesses, but that the Vica-
ridge-House was so ruinous, and a
Promise being past of my being else-
A 2 where;*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

where; yet I must needs confess my self to be indebted since to come, and give you a Sermon: So that I am so long indebted upon that account, Usq; dum usura superat sortem; That the very Interest doth far exceed the Principal. However, I would have you know, that I still bear an honest Mind, having a Desire to pay according to my Ability; and though I cannot come and pay what I owe in Person, yet I have sent my Substitute, this Paper Messenger to supply my Place; and knowing how well you, and those about you, stand affected to the Present Government, I have pitcht upon Printing a Thanksgiving-Sermon for the Discovery and Disappointment of the late Dangerous Plot of Assassinating His Majesty, and

The Epistle Dedicatory.

and the Invading this Kingdom with a design of rooting out our Religion, *under the notion of the Northern Heresie : And I knowing how stedfast you have been, and others about you, to the Truth, and how ready you are to assist its Favourers, and to resist its Opposers, I thought good to present you with a taste of what I did deliver upon that Occasion, hoping it may fall into the Hands of some of that worthy Family of the Hales, that formerly were my Noble Benefactors. I hope there are some of that Race alive in those Parts, though I hear, to my Grief, that Worthy Lady, the Lady Austin, is dead. God hath hitherto prolonged my Life, and it is much upon my Spirit to give you a Visit in those Parts before I die.*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

I do but present you with a taste of my Labours, and wish they may be well relisht and receiv'd by you ; it then may be an Inducement to put out more of my Labours, yet before I die. I remember a Passage of Bishop Latimer's, that he Preach'd in a Sermon before the King, of one that had brought up his Son at the University, and a Gentleman not far off from him, having a Living in his Gift newly fallen ; that he might gain it for his Son, presents him with a Dish of ten very fair Apples, and had put into every one of the Apples 10 twenty Shilling Pieces, and sent his Man with them to the Patron, and withal to desire him to present his Son to the Living of his that was fallen. The Man having deli-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

delivered them, and desiring him in his Master's Name to remember his Son for the Living; the Gentleman seemed to be angry, and bid him carry back his Master's Apples, he would have none of them. Which the Man did, and told his Master that he would have none of his Apples. Says his Master to him, Carry them again, and desire him but to taste one of them, and as he likes that, to accept of the rest. Which the Man did, and tells him, That his Master however did desire him but to taste one of them. Which he did, and finding 10 twenty Shilling Pieces in it, crys out, I marry, if they be all like this, thy Master's Son shall have the Living. I will assure you, says the Man, they all came off of the same

The Epistle Dedicatory.

same Tree : Though Symony was
in use then, yet not so openly practi-
ced as now a-days. The Use that I
shall make of the Story, is only to
tempt you to a taste of my Labours
in Print, and as this is relisht it is
possible the World may have more of
them. So beseeching the Lord to
bless you, and the Worthy Families
not far off from you, I must needs
acknowledge that I still remain,

Your very much obliged,

To serve, You,

Edmund Godwin.

Nahum I. ver. 7.

*The Lord is good, a strong hold in
the day of trouble, and he know-
eth them that trust in him.*

THE Apostle *Paul* hath foretold
how in the latter perillous times,
χαλεποι καιροί, hard times for Per-
sons to keep Faith and a good
Conscience; and indeed dangerous in which
to live, in regard of the abounding of Sin;
and we seem to be fallen into the same times
that the Apostle *Paul* himself was fallen into,
mentioned 2 Cor. 11. 26. as you may see
there: He was in Journeying often as His
Majesty K. *William* hath been, in Perils of
Waters, in Perils of Robbers, in Perils by his
own Country-men, in Perils by other Coun-
try-men, in Perils in the City, in Perils in
the Country, in Perils amongst false Bre-
thren, and in Perils amongst pretended
Friends; so that there hath been threatned
B ubique

ubique naufragium. However, God hath been good, may his Majesty now say, and a Strong-hold, and a sure Defence in all sorts of Troubles, and wonderfully delivered in every Danger; hitherto he hath been an *Ebenezer*.

In the foregoing part of the Chapter, you have first the Inscription of the Prophecy in the first Verse, and then a Description of the Almighty, first in his Power and Greatness in five of the foregoing Verses, and then in Goodness and Mercy; having to deal with many and mighty Adversaries, as with *Nineveh* that great City, the Men whereof were great Sinners before the Lord, and had repented of their former Repentings in *Jonah's* time, and had returned with the Dog to their former Vomit, and with the Sow to their wallowing again in the Mire of Sin, so that their latter State was now worse than the former; for which God threatens them with the greatest Plagues, and heaviest Judgments: But God is never so angry, but in Wrath he can and will shew Mercy, and knows his Friends from his Foes, according to the Tenor of the Words of the Text, *The Lord is good.*

So that the Words are like a Light shining in a dark place, or as a Haven or Harbour in time of a Storm, or a strong Fort or Tower in the day of Distress, to which the

the Righteous may run and resort in the time of Danger, and be sure to be safe. So that you have in the Words,

First, Something affirmed, *That the Lord is good.*

Secondly, You have the same confirmed by a twofold Argument ; As,

1st. In that he *is a strong hold in the day of trouble.*

2^{dly}. In that he *knows those that trust in him.*

That God is good, is such a Truth as we all have cause to set our Seals unto, for he hath not left himself without witness of doing of us good, especially of late in defending and delivering of us ; and so I shall come to take notice first of the Time when it is that his Goodness doth most appear, and that is in the Time of Trouble ; and then to whom it doth appear, and that is to such as know him, or rather are known of him, such as not barely know him, but trust in him.

Now the Doctrines that I shall lay down from the Words, are these ;

Doct. 1. That God's People here in this World meet with days of Trouble.

Doct. 2. That they never find times so bad, but still they find God to be good.

Doct. 3. That in times of Danger, God then more especially will be a strong hold too.

Doct. 4. God knows such as trust in him in a more special manner to save.

On the first, namely, That God's People here in this World, meet with days of Trouble.

Now we may take notice of this in all the faithful Servants of God : God had one Son without Sin, but he never had any without Sorrow ; his own Son that was the head of the Church, was a Man of Sorrows ; and the first Man that died, he died for Religion, and so the Father of the Faithful, who ever had greater or hotter Trials ? And so *Jacob*, in whose Posterity the Church was settled, How doth he complain that *few and evil were the days of his Pilgrimage* ; yet they were full of Trouble, and the time of Trouble is called *the day of Jacob's Trouble* ; and so *Job*, Who more troubled and afflicted than he ? And so *David*, that was a Man after God's own Heart, yet how doth he cry out ? *Lord, Remember David, and all his Troubles*, Psal. 132. 1.

Quest. But how comes it about that such as are so Godly, are so sorely afflicted ?

Ans.

Ans. First, This comes from God himself. 2dly, From Satan, the God of this World. 3dly, From Satan's Instruments, the Men of the World. Lastly, From themselves, or their near Relations.

First, This comes from God himself: For Afflictions rise not out of the Dust, but God sends them, first to punish Sin past. 2dly, To purge Sin present. 3dly, To prevent Sin for the time to come.

First, to punish Sin past: I know indeed that the Antinomians will not allow of such an Expression to be used in respect of God's own People and Children: They say God only punishes from Sin, and not for Sin in them: But doubtless we may speak as the Word of God speaks without offence; now says the Church, *Lam. 3. 39. Wherefore doth the living Man complain, is it not for the Punishment of his Sin: And so Amos 3. 2. You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth; therefore I will punish you for all your Iniquities.* One would have thought it should rather have run thus, *You only have I known of all the Families upon earth, therefore I will spare you for your Iniquities:* No, but therefore I will punish you for your Iniquities; you of all others shall be sure to smart soonest and forest here in this World. I confess that in a strict Sense they cannot so properly be called Punishments as Chastisements,

because Christ hath born the Punishments of Believers Sins in his own Body upon the Tree, and when his Soul likewise was made a Sacrifice to satisfy the Justice of God for their Sin.

2dly, God sends Afflictions on his own People to purge Sin present : There are the Remnants of Sin and Corruption in the best of God's Children and Princes. Children if they be sick, they must be Physickt as well as others : *By this therefore*, as it is *Isa. 27. 9. shall the Iniquity of Jacob be purged ;* and now there is a great difference between Physicians purging, and God's purging of his People and Children : When Physicians purge their Patients, they many times purge out the good Humours as well as the bad ; but God when he purges his Children, he only purges out the bad Humours, as in the place we named before ; and this is all the fruit, to take away his Sin ; not to take the Sinner, but to take away his Sin.

3dly, God sends Troubles and Afflictions on his own People and Children to prevent Sin in them for the time to come, and to keep them within compass : You know what David said of himself, *Psal. 119. Before I was afflicted I went wrong, but now have I kept thy word, and kept in the right way ;* And therefore God threatens his Apostatical Church, *Hosea 2. 6. Therefore, behold, I will*

will hedge up thy way with Thornes. She was apt to break out into the Pastures of forbidden Pleasures; therefore God would set Thornes in her paths, if she would break over, she should prick and wound her self; and if that would not do, God would make a Wall that she shall not find her paths: Hedges may be easily troden down, but Walls are not so easily climbed over. Thus God threatens to do to his, when he intends to do them good; and Afflictions are not so properly said to be threatned, as promised to God's own People and Children, as you may see *Psal.* 89 30, 31, 32. therefore it is added the 33^d Verse, *Neither will I suffer my Faithfulness to fail*; that is, in regard of fulfilling what before he had promised.

4^{thly}, Again, God orders it so that they shall have their days of Trouble here, that they may not set up their rest in this World, as the other two Tribes and an half did on this side *Jordan*, as People are too apt to do when all things go well with them, and are apt to flow in upon them; then they are ready to talk of building Tabernacles here, and never think of going hence: But now that God may knock off their fingers from things below, and make them know that this is not their Rest, God lets them meet with many Calamities and sore Troubles, that so they may know that this is not their
Rest,

Rest, as God says to his own People, *Mich. 2. 10. Arise, and depart, this is not your Rest, it is polluted*; it is defiled with Sin, and can give you no more Rest than a Bed of Thorns can do to a sick Person. O! it is polluted, and therefore it must not be your Rest. Sin hath polluted all things here in this World, therefore get you hence; tho' they should combine altogether to do you good, yet they cannot give you perfect Rest: When God made all things at first, he made them very good, and there was that in them then that might give Satisfaction to the Heart of Man; but now Sin hath polluted the Creature, and filled it with nothing but Dirt and Filthiness. Sin hath not only put our Mouths out of taste that we can take no Contentment, or find any Satisfaction in the Creature, but it hath emptied it of all that was truly good in it: So that now we have *Carbones pro Thesauo*, Coals instead of golden Mines; so that God doth this.

5^{thly}, That they may be weaned from the World, and from all wordly things; *For the World passeth away*, [1 *Job. 2. 17.*] and we must pass away that are in it; for we have here no abiding City, but yet the People of God are too apt to let out their Hearts and Affections on the things of this present World: If they have all sorts of
Flowers

Flowers in their Garden, they are too apt to make a Nose-gay of them, and to hold them so fast till they wither in their hand : when a full cup of Prosperity is fill'd out to them, God many times anoints the brim with Aloes, or some bitter thing, that they may not drink too long of it, nor too much : Sometimes God beats their Plow-shares into Swords, and turns their Rods into a Serpent.

Again, God brings them into days of Trouble for the trial of their Graces, both for the trial,

First, Of the Truth of them.

Secondly, Of the Strength of them.

First, The Truth of them ; hang heavy Weights upon rotten Boughs, and they break them ; but upon green and sound Boughs, and they bear them ; unsound fruit will hang upon the Tree in a still and calm day, but if it be stormy then down it falls. The building upon the Sand may make as fair a shew in a Sun-shine day, as that built upon the Rock ; but when the Floods come, and the Winds blow hard, then down it falls, when the other stands. An unsound Foot may travel pretty well in soft and green Way, but when it comes upon the hard Stones, then it will be apt to boggle and
C halt.

halt. It was the Sword that did discover to whom of right the Child did belong unto, 1 *Kings* 3. 24. There be many that think their Graces are sound and good, but when a Storm, or any Hardship comes, how full of Unbelief and Impatience, are they there. That God may try his People's Graces, whether they are sound or no, he brings many stormy days over their heads; if Afflictions bring us nearer to God, it is a great sign they are sanctified to us; but if they drive us further from God, it is a great sign that they are in Wrath, and not for our good. God speaks to a Believer when he afflicts him, as *Isaac* did to *Jacob* when he came to him for the Blessing; *Come near me, my Son, that I may feel thee whether thou beest my very Son Esau or no?* So if they bring us nearer to God, and we endure them with patient submitting to the Will of God without any muttering or repining, it is a great sign that we are indeed the Children of God.

Secondly, He doth it also to try the Strength of their Graces: It must be a strong Wing that must fly against the Wind, weak Grace will hardly bear up in a strong day; *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy Strength is small, saith Solomon, Prov. 24. 10.* To love God when he hears our Prayers, and answers our Prayers presently, is no great

great matter ; but to continue praying, when he shuts out our Prayer, as he did the Churches, *Lam.* 3. 8. and appears as an Enemy, this argues strength of Faith : It is an easy thing to love God when he smiles upon you with his Favours and Blessings ; but to love him when he hath a Frown in his Brow, and a Rod in his Hand, this argueth strength : That fire of Love burns hot, that many waters of Affliction cannot quench, or put it out. We read in *Matth.* 15. of a Woman that came to Christ with Words in her Mouth and Sorrow in her Heart, and all to move him to pity. At first he gave her no answer ; afterwards his Disciples are her Spokes-men in her behalf : After that Christ calls her Dog, yet she will not give him over ; a Cure she came for, for her Daughter, and a Cure she must have afore she goes away. She doth in a manner confess her self a Dog, and doth but desire the Favour that Dogs are apt to have at their Master's hands ; a crum of his Charity. O Woman, says Christ, *great is thy Faith !* O ! it is Strength of Faith that will trust and rest in Christ when he doth not answer, nay when he doth refuse and reject, and seem to cast off.

Again, the Children of God have their days of Trouble : That by this means God might humble them, and bring down the Pride of their Spirits, Pride and Ambition ;

it is an ill Weed, and will not only grow in the vast howling Wilderness, but often it springs up in the Garden of God: Not only wicked Men are guilty of this Sin, but sometimes the Children of God are apt to be puffed up with Pride, as we see it in *Hezekiah*; nay they are apt to be puffed up with their very Graces, as the Devil was with his Excellencies; and whereas their Graces should be a means to keep them humble, they will be apt to grow proud of them, if they take not heed now to let out this bladder of Pride. Sometimes there is sent a Thorne in the Flesh, as there was to *Paul*; and sometimes God thrusts in the Sword of Affliction to let out the Corruption of this big-bellied *Vicu*: A Sword was sent to pierce the Heart of the Blessed Virgin, that was so highly exalted, in all probability to keep her humble. It is the Speech of *Elibu*, *Job 33. 17. He chasteneth Man with pain*, that he may hide Pride from Man: In the *14th Verse*, *God speaketh once, yea twice*. God speaketh once by his Word, and again by his Sword; once by his Word, and Man heareth it not; and he speaks again by his Rod, and all to hide Pride from Man, and that they may not think poorly of others in regard of themselves.

Again, they meet with days of Trouble that they may be made conformable to Je-
sus

fus Christ, God's dearly beloved Son, so *Rom.* 8. 29. They are the Apostle's words there; That Christ and his Members may be all of a piece: The Children of God are not made choice of, and appointed unto Glory only, but they are also appointed unto Conformity to Jesus Christ: You know that whilst he was God, he was in Glory; but when he became the Son of Man, he became a Man of Sorrows, and we hid our faces from him, as it is *Isa.* 53. as if we were ashamed of him. Trouble was as a Thred drawn thorow the whole course of his Life: Now that God's Children may be conformable to Christ, they meet with days of Trouble; they must be afflicted and misused; for if they have done so to the green Tree, what will they not do to the dry, who is no better than fit Fuel to the everlasting Fire?

Again, they meet with days of Trouble, that they may be the more put upon the Duty of Prayer; for times of Affliction are more properly times of Supplication and Prayer; *Call upon me, says God, in the day of Trouble.* Then God calls upon us to call upon him; and then we are more apt to do it, than at other times, as appears *Isa.* 26. 16. *Lord, in Trouble have they visited thee, and have poured out a Prayer when thy chastening was upon them.* At other times Prayer came

from them but sparingly and droppingly ; but *when thy chastening was upon them, then they poured out a Prayer* ; then they even poured out their Hearts before the Lord.

They meet with days of Trouble, that they might more sweetly taste of Peace : How sweet is an hour's Rest after many toilsome and troublesome Nights. That we might relish Mercies the better, God doth oftentimes sawce them with troublesome Seasons. O ! How comfortable will a Haven of Rest be after troublesome and dangerous Tempests at Sea, and so doubtless Heaven will be Heaven indeed to him that hath met with many Troubles and Afflictions here in this World. But yet here is our Comfort here in this Life ; Though the days are never so evil, yet God is always good, a strong hold, to whom we may always resort, and knows all them that trust in him. And that is the next thing I shall shew you, how then God is good, though Men and the Times are never so bad.

1st. God is good essentially, yea God is Goodness it self ; and God must needs cease to be when he ceases to be good, he ceases to be God.

2dly. God is good efficiently ; God is not only good, but he doth good, *Psal.* 119. 68. As the Sun doth not keep in his Beams to himself,

himself, but he spreads them abroad for the good of the Universe : So *God is good to all*, says the Psalmist, *Psal. 145. 9. and his tender Mercies are over all his Works.*

3dly. God is eminently good, and that to his own People. God is universally good : There is not any Creature in the World, but he doth partake of the Goodness of God : In some measure he makes his Sun to rise upon the Just and the Unjust, and he makes his Rain to fall upon wicked Mens Fields, as well as upon the Fields of the Righteous. But God is in a more special manner good to them that be good ; *Truly God is good to Israel*, says the Psalmist, *Psal. 72. 1. to all that are of a clean Heart.*

Object. But is he not good to all ? Did you not say he is good to all, may some say ? I, but not with the same Goodness, not with saving Goodness ; so he is good only to his Elect, and so he is eternally good to them, not only in this World, but also in the World to come ; God ceases to be good to wicked Men in the World to come : *Remember Son*, says *Abraham to Dives*, *thou hadst thy good things* : I, thou hadst them, but now thou hast them not. But now God is good to his both in this World, and in the World to come.

Here

Here in this World he is a Strong-hold to them, when Enemies and Evils are abroad, and a House of Defence to which they may always resort in the time of Need and Distress: God being a universal and perpetual good God, is all in all in every Condition: Bread is good to feed you, but it cannot clothe you. Again, Clothes are good to warm you, but they cannot feed you; but God is good every way: *My God*, says the Apostle, *shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in Glory by Christ Jesus*, Phil. 4. 19. Not only some, but all your Needs, and he doth all after the best sort; he is a Father, and the best Father; he is a Master, and the best Master; he is a Friend, and the best Friend; he is a Strong-hold, and the best Strong-hold: and the Excellency of this Strong-hold I shall endeavour to make out to you thus.

First, He is a high Strong-hold; so high indeed, that none can reach him that is in this Strong-hold, or that hath God for his Strong-hold to defend him; he shall be so compast in with the Loving-kindness of God, that nothing shall do him hurt: His *Dwellings shall be on high*, says the Prophet, *his Place of Defence shall be the Munitions of Rocks, Bread shall be given, his Waters shall be sure*, Isa. 33. 16. See how God doth provide for
the

the Safety and Welfare of his, that *he shall dwell on high*, out of Gun-shot, and so out of Danger, for *his place of defence shall be the Munitions of Rocks*, or Rock within Rock: I, but Rocks, though they be good for fence, yet they be naught for food; it was the Devil that would have Stones turned into Bread. I, but rather than a Believer shall starve, he shall have Bread given: I, but may he not perish there for want of Water? No, *his Waters shall be sure*; so safe is he that hath God for his Strong-hold.

Secondly, God as he is a high Strong-hold, so he is a nigh Strong-hold; some may be cut off before they can get to their Strong-hold; their Strong-hold may be so far, that they may be never the better for their Strong-hold: But what says the Psalmist concerning Almighty God, *Psal. 46. 1. God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in Trouble*; not only a help, but a present help, yea a very present help in time of Trouble.

Thirdly, God is a capacious Strong-hold, ready to receive all that fly unto him for Defence in the name of Christ; and as Christ says, *He that comes unto me, I will in no wise cast out, John 6. 37.* So those that come unto God by Christ, *he will in no wise keep out*, for there is Room and Entertainment enough to be found in him; some Strong-holds are so narrow and straight, that

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if

if many fly unto them, they are fain to hang, many of them, like Bees about the Hive's Mouth, and cannot get in: But whoever yet fled to God to hide him, and was not received and defended by him?

Fourthly, God is an invisible Strong-hold, such a Strong-hold as all their Enemies are not able to find out; and therefore all that flee unto him, and get into him, must needs be safe: We know when the Sodomites would have offered Violence to *Lot*, and to have pull'd him out of his House, the Angels smote them with Blindness that they could not so much as find the Door, much less pull him out of his House: So when the Syrians came with a great Army to carry away the Prophet *Elisha*, and had compassed the City round, so that one would have thought there could have been no escaping, yet then *Elisha* had an invisible Guard; and though his Man could not see it at the first, yet after the Prophet had pray'd to God to open his Eyes, then he could see the Mountain full of Horses and Chariots of Fire round about his Master.

Lastly, To name no more Properties and Excellencies of this Strong-hold, God is an invincible Strong-hold; other Strong-holds are not able to hold out in the day of God's Anger; the least puff or push of God's Displeasure will thrust them down. *Nineveh* that
stately

stately City, that had Walls 100 foot high and beautified with 1300 Towers: All her Strong-holds shall be like Fig-trees with the first ripe Figs, which when they are shaken, shall fall into the Mouth of the Eater: But who can overthrow such a Strong-hold as God is, that is Almighty? *Wo be to him that strives with his Maker.*

Use I. If God be such an excellent Strong-hold, then see what a bosom you have here to flee unto; that whatsoever evil days come, yet if you have recourse to him for your Strong-hold, you may be sure to be safe; and take heed, I beseech you, that you do not set up your Rest in any thing on this side God. When it is a day of Trouble, as we are threatned with such a day at this time, Counsel and Strength of Men and Horses, and Ships, cannot be a Strong-hold for us without God. See what the Prophet says in the second Chapter of *Isaiab*, *Cease from Man, whose Breath is in his Nostrils*; and if Man must be ceased from, much rather must the things that Man hath made be ceased from, as Ships and pleasant Pictures, as the Prophet instances in that Chapter. Now there be these three things that may rap off your Fingers from the Creature, or making any thing your Strong-hold on this side God.

Now for this consider,

1. The Inutility or Unprofitableness of all Creature-help in the day of Distress, in the day of God's Anger; for *Riches profit nothing in the day of God's Wrath*, saith Solomon, *Prov. 11. 4.* But they many times make the Owner the more in danger, as the Gold Ring hath made some to loose the Finger: *And what shall it profit a Man*, says our Saviour, *to gain the whole World, and to loose his own Soul.* That were a Loss above all other Losses; thou hast better lose thy Wife, thy Children, thy House, thy Lands, nay, thy Life it self, than loose thy Soul; and yet thus many do to gain the World: But what Profit when they come to take away thy Soul? The things of this World have not so much Worth in them as to deliver your Souls from Death or Hell, or Damnation; so that it cost more to redeem one Soul than all the World comes to: They have not so much worth in them as to satisfy one of your Debts; for no Man knows Love or Hatred by all that is before him; they have no power to pacify Conscience in its Distress.

The things of this World prove many times lothing Torments to dying Christians; and they are many times dying Comforts to living Christians.

2. The

2. The Mutability of the Creature : There is a great deal of Mutability in the Creature ; you cannot say the Moon will shine two days together with the same face ; so the things of the World are likened to the Moon, *Rev.* 12. 1. The Woman, that is the Church, is said to have the *Moon under her Feet ; i. e.* All worldly things.

Again, They are sometimes likened to the Wind, *Dan.* 7. 2. says the Prophet there, *I saw the four Winds striving upon the Sea.* And what were those four Winds, but the four Monarchies, striving upon the Sea of this World which should be uppermost : And so as the Moon doth not shine two days together with the same face, no more are you sure the Wind will blow two hours together in the same Quarter. The greatest Monarchies and Kingdoms are but so many stormy and violent Winds ; and will you make that your Strong-hold that is so subject to Alteration and Change ? In a stormy day will you go to a Shadow for your Refuge or Shelter.

3. Besides all this, there is a Corruptibility in all these things ; so the Apostle speaks to this purpose, *1 Pet.* 1. 19. He calls there Silver and Gold corruptible things, which we are apt to account most durable : How may all the Glory of the World, which we are apt to account most shining and excel-

lent, be wink't into Blackness and Dark-
ness? All the Glory of Man is but as the
Flower of Grass: All *Solomon's* Glory was
but that of the Lilly, of very short Continu-
ance; the Flower may fade whilst the
Stalk yet standeth, and yet that within a
short while will be cast into the Oven: The
Flower may be nipt in the Bud; but if it be
let alone, it will fall of it self, such are Crea-
ture Excellencies; and therefore I beseech
you do not set up your Cities of Refuge on
this side God.

And for your further comfort, consider
how God knows such as are in Trouble and
trust in him, and have Dependance upon
him for Safety and Deliverance; if God's
People could be in Adversity, and God not
know it, then their case would be sad in-
deed; but God knows what all your Ailes
and Troubles are, and will certainly deliver
you out of them all, if you depend upon him
and trust in him.

Quest. But are there not many that are
Believers, that are cut off in their Troubles
and Straits, as good *Josiah* and others?

Answ. There are seldom any that in the
height of their Dependance upon God, that
have acted Faith, and fully relied upon him
• for Deliverance, that have been cut off: For
you must know that it is one thing to have
Faith,

Faith, and another thing to act Faith ; as it is one thing to have a Sword, and another thing to use it : Many a one may be cut off for not using of his Sword ; whereas if he had used it, very like he might have escap'd ; and it is a Saying of the Psalmist concerning the goldly Man, *Psal. 112. 7. He shall not be afraid of any evil tydings: Why? His Heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.* All the while he acts his Faith on God, he hath no cause to fear : So that this further informs us that the Wicked shall never beat Believers out of heart, for in the worst times they have a Strong-hold ; a good God to run unto, and so shall they be saved from all their Enemies : When they are in the greatest danger, still they have a God that takes Cognizance of them, when it may be their Friends and neer Relations will take no notice of them : *Thou hast known my Soul in Adversities, saith David, Psal. 31. 7.* If they could be in Adversities, and God not know it, it would then be a sad thing indeed ; but God knows whatsoever Adversities you are in, and will doubtless deliver his : I, but are not many of them cut off by Death ? I answer ; God will be so good to them as to deliver them from Death or by Death, and therefore the day of Death is better to them than the day of their Birth ; for when they are born, then they come into Trouble, but
when

when they die then they come out of Trouble ; and it is better to come out of Trouble, than to come into Trouble. This is the Comfort that they have that trust in God : God knows them, and knows how to deliver them when they do not know how to deliver themselves ; *We know not what to do*, says *Jehoshaphat*, *2 Chron. 20. 12.* I, but God knows what to do, and how to deliver his, and to reserve the Wicked for the day of Wrath : For this Knowledg of God, whereby he knoweth his, is not a bare speculative Knowledg, as he knoweth all things, but as special Knowledg, as if he knew none in the World beside ; as God said concerning his own People, *Amos 3. 2. You have I known of all the Families upon Earth ;* and as God said to *Moses*, *Thee have I known by name* : As if God knew none in the World besides after such a sort ; and therefore he hath his Marks whereby he distinguishes between his own People and others : So *Ezekiel 9.* a Mark is set upon them that mourn ; as if he did, and would know them from all the People on the Earth : So *2 Tim. 2. 19. The Lord knoweth who are his ;* for it is indeed a Knowledg that doth imply Love and Affection to the Party that he knows ; and therefore, *John 10. 10.* Christ is said to know his Sheep. Why did he not know the Goats, wicked and ungodly

godly Men? Yes, doubtless he did; but he did not know them with that Love and Care, and Affection, as he did his Sheep; and besides, it is such a Knowledge as doth imply Approbation; so *Psal. I.* and the last Verse, *The Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous.* Why, doth he not know the way of the Unrighteous too? Yes, doubtless he doth: Can they walk in such a secret Path, that God cannot find them out? Nay, there is not a Way of their Feet, a Work of their Hands, a Word of their Mouths, or a Thought of their Hearts, but it is better known to God than to themselves; who is indeed the Father of Lights, and will doubtless in his good time, bring to light all the hidden Works of Darkness, and Dishonesty and Cruelty, though never so cunningly contrived, as he hath done of late, to the Shame and Confusion of the Plotters: But as they have conceived Mischief, let us conceive Praise, and let us be often doing that Work upon Earth which we shall be always doing in Heaven. And to encourage you to the Duty, consider that it is a greater matter to praise God here upon Earth, in the midst of Enemies, than to praise God in Heaven, where all Enemies are subdued, and all Happiness enjoyed, and none but such as will help forward the Work, and none that will hinder

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it,

it, as here are too many here. And that you may not be afraid of your Adversaries, or discouraged from trusting in God, consider, though your Enemies carry it out for the present with a great deal of Splendour and Bravery, yet they are but Men, and Men *whose Breath is in their Nostrils*; and when God takes it away, they die and cannot withstand God's stroak: Many thousands of them have been cut off in these Wars already, that look'd upon themselves as brave Fellows.

And besides, they are on that side that must fall: God hath said it, that Antichrist and his Adherents must be destroyed, and it shall certainly come to pass; for hath the Lord of Hosts said it, and shall he not do it, whose Word is his Work? *I will work says God, and who shall let it.*

Besides, as *Abijah* told *Jeroboam*, *With you are the Golden Calves*; and so with our Adversaries are graven Images, and they are such as have forsaken God, and defiled his true Worship, and God hath forsaken them; and let such be our Enemies, as many, and as much as they will, if we have but God on our side, we shall do well enough.

Again, Consider, that you may not be offended at their outward Bravery and Splendour, how the triumphing of the Wicked is but short, but their end will be that

that they shall perish for ever ; and on the other side, though the Godly are afflicted, yet they are not deserted as the Ungodly are ; though they are cast down, yet they are not cast off. *Saul* and *David* they were both afflicted, and greatly distressed : *Saul* in his Distress he runs to a Witch ; O ! says *Saul*, *I am sorely distressed : Why so ? Why the Philistines make War against me : Why so they had done formerly, and yet Saul did then well enough.* I, but says he, *and God is departed from me.* I, there was the cause, there lay the Core of all his Miseries ; for this is like the dropping of the Eyes out of the Head, the darkning of the Sun in the Firmament, the departing of the Soul out of the Body : Now *David* likewise, he was greatly distressed for the City *Ziglag*, where his Treasure was that was burnt, and his Wives they were carried away Captives, and the People likewise they were ready to stone him ; so that his Treasure was gone, his Wives were gone, and the Hearts and Affections of his People were gone off from him. What doth he do now ? Doth he go to a Witch, or use any unlawful means, as *Saul* did ? No, he goes and encourages himself in the Lord his God, and you see how bravely he comes off afterward.

Hence we may see the Excellency of Faith, and how Believers having such a

Strong-hold, shall never be beat quite out of heart, having so good a God to relie upon ; for though their Enemies threaten and rage never so much, yet Believers have divers Props to stay and uphold their Hearts in days of Trouble, and to cause them not to be dismaid, but still have cause to trust in God : As,

1st. That the Devil and his Instruments, wicked Men, they are all in the hand of God, and they can do no more against them than God gives them leave : It is true, God sometimes lets out a Link or two of the Devil's Chain, but still he keeps the Chain in his own hand, that he nor his cannot do so much Mischief as otherwise they would.

2^{dly}. When you are in any danger, you must act Faith upon God ; so the Prophet resolves to do, *Psalms 56. 3. What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee* : Now that you may be able to act Faith aright,

1. You must labour to have a right Knowledg of God, and of what God is ; for you cannot stay your Minds, and trust in him whom you do not know, and have no Acquaintance with him : As one said sometime to a Gentlemen that was walking in *Pauls*, *Pray lend me ten Pounds* : *Ten Pounds*, says the Gentleman, *why I do not know you*.
Says

Says the other, *If you did, you would hardly lend me ten Shillings.* Some are better known than trusted, but so is not God; but the more you know him, the more apt you will be to trust in him, so *Psal. 9. 10.* especially if it be an experimental Knowledge; so *Psal. 22. 4.* *Our Fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them:* And so if we, their Posterity, trust in God, God will deliver us; *They cried unto thee, saith the Church, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded:* So doubtless if we cry unto our Forefathers God, we shall be delivered; if we trust in him, and have recourse to him, we shall not be confounded: But confounded shall they be that worship carved Images; as it is plain our Adversaries do. Well, but what is it that we must know of God more especially, that we may be brought to trust in him, and depend upon him in a day of Distress?

1st. God's Power, that he is able to help and to defend his People, whatsoever their Distresses and their Adversaries are; you must mightily work this upon your Spirits, the Consideration of the Power and Greatness of God; therefore you have the Greatness of God wonderfully set out in the foregoing part of this Chapter, for God

will not imploy his Greatness against his People, but for his People's good. As also you are to take notice of the All-sufficiency of God, how he is able to save to the uttermost all such as put their trust in him.

When *Abraham* was as a poor Pilgrim, and went from one Kingdom to another People, to support his Faith, God tells him, *I am God*; All-sufficient, walk before me, and be thou perfect, and then he need not be afraid: We can never stay our Minds, and trust in God so well as we should, unless we rely upon God as a God All-sufficient, that is able to succour us in every Case and Condition. See what supported the three Children, as they are commonly called, against the Wrath of the great King, *Dan 3. 17.* they stay their Minds greatly on God; *Our God*, say they, *is able to deliver us*: They did not fear the Wrath of the great King, because, with *Moses* by an Eye of Faith, they saw him that was invisible; they knew they had an invincible Stronghold to resort unto, a good God that was able to deliver them, how, and as he pleased. Now when you distrust God's Power, you do as it were tie up the hands of Omnipotency. It is said, *Mark 6. 5.* our Saviour could do no mighty Works there, because of their Unbelief: God doth therefore wonderfully tutor his Children about the

the Consideration of his Power, as you may observe in Scripture. When God promises to appear in the way of saving and delivering his People, he doth very much insist on this, what a powerful God he is, able to do above what they are able to ask or think, that so their Faith might be well grounded upon a good foundation; see for this a place or two, *Isa. 40. 9, 10.* There the Prophet speaks by way of promise, that *the Lord God would come*; i. e. to comfort and relieve his People: He tells them he *would come with a strong hand*, and as it were with an out-stretched arm, *and his arm shall rule for him*: And he further insists upon this thing, and maketh it the great Theam that he goeth upon. If you read the 12th Verse of this Chapter, you shall find that he had a strong Hand indeed, and an Arm stretched out, in that he was able to hold all the Waters of the Sea, and to measure out Heaven, which is, *locus omnium Spaciosissimus*, with a Span, and that he was able to weigh the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance; *Behold*, saith he, *the Nations*: By Nations we are to understand great Countries and Kingdoms; *What are they but as a drop of the Bucket, and as a small dust of the Balance? Behold, he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing.* As this Isle, which we call Great Britain, is a very little thing in
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the hands of Almighty God ; and when he comes to the 26th Verse, there he calls upon them to *lift up their eyes, and to behold him who hath created these things ; so great and so many, that bringeth out their host by number* : He must needs be great himself, that hath made so many, and such great things. And thus he goeth on to set forth the Power and Greatness of God, to be a support to the Faith of his People : *I have wondred, saith a Godly and Learned Man, that reading of Scripture in my younger years, there should be such a suddain Digression to the Power of God, as there is ; and now I see there is a great deal of reason for it, to strengthen the Faith of his People, that they firmly believe his Promises ; as you may find, if you observe, in many other places* : So you have the Power of God set forth in this Chapter.

2dly. If you would trust in God, and depend upon him in *the day of trouble and distress* ; as you must be very well principled in the Power, so also in his Willingness and Readiness to succour and to receive you, and so to save you in the time of Danger and Distress. Some have Power to do good, but they have no heart to do it ; you must consider, as there is an Ability in God to do good, so there is a Propensity to do good : There is a very great Inclination in God to help and to save his afflicted Ones.

Observe

observe, I pray, how the Scripture speaks to this, *Psal. 46. 1.* It was at such a time when there was great Dread upon the face of the Earth. The Prophet seems to represent it so; as if the Earth should totter and be removed, and the Mountains carried into the midst of the Sea, and the Waters roar and make a hideous noise, and all things in a hurly-burly; yet there was no cause for such as trust in God to fear, for *God is our Refuge and Strength, say they, our Strong-hold, a very present Help in trouble.* He is not only a Help, but a present Help; yea, *a very present Help in trouble.* The great Willingness of God the Lord to appear for them, appears in his Readiness to appear to them, if we do but call upon him and cry to him; and he can do but little that cannot cry for help. Now *Psalms the 86. 7.* says the Prophet, *In the day of my Trouble I will call upon thee; for thou wilt answer me.* The God of a true Believer is not like the God of Baal's Priests, upon whom they called from Morning even till Noon, saying, *O Baal, hear us:* But there was no Voice, nor any that answered; no more there would have been if they had prayed never so long; if he had prayed till Doomsday, it had been all one: But no sooner doth the true Prophet pray, but presently Fire comes down from Heaven,

and consumes the Sacrifice, for the Confusion of the Churches Adversaries. And how doth the Prophet promise to himself, in the fore-named place, how God would hear him? Which he could not have done, but that he was assured of his Willingness so to do; for he doth not say, *the Lord can hear me*, but *the Lord will hear me*. And he saith nothing but what he hath a Promise for upon the Performance of the foresaid Duty. Nay further, to shew his Readiness and Willingness to hear and help, it is said in one place, *That before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear*. So no sooner did the Leper say, *Matth. 8. 2. Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean*; but presently Christ replies, *I will, be thou clean*; as if he echoed back the same words; and immediately says the Text, *his Leprosie was cleansed*. And that there is a great deal of Readiness and Willingness in God to help, you must consider how God doth take special notice of the Trouble and Afflictions that his People lie under, and how he is apt to lay it to heart; for in all their Afflictions he is afflicted; *I have surely seen*, says God, *the Affliction of my People, and have heard their Cry*, *Exod. 3. 7*. It is not with him, as it is with some that pass by such as are in Misery, and take little or no notice of their

their Trouble, as the Priest and Levite that saw the Man wounded and half dead, and there let him lye for all them. But if God's People are never so little wronged, he is presently concerned; if they are reproached, they are reproached in his sight: He takes it as done to himself; *He that toucheth you, says God, toucheth the Apple of mine Eye, Zach. 2. 8.* So he that persecuteth the People of God, it is as if he did persecute Christ himself, *Acts 9. 5.* And all the Rage that they express against the People of God, it is set down as done against God himself; *I know, says God, thy abode, and thy going out and thy coming in, and thy Rage against me:* It is all down in black and white, what the World doth for, or against his Children.

3dly. God doth not only look on his Peoples Affliction, but it is the lovingest Look, and with as much Compassion, as possible may be imagined; as you may see *Psal. 103. 13. Like us a Father pitieth his Children, the like Pity doth the Lord shew to those that are his:* His Look shews his Love, as you may see *Exod. 2. 23, 25.* It pierces his very Heart to hear their Sighs, and to see their Miseries: So their Sorrows came up when his People were afflicted in Egypt; it is said in the place named before, that the Children of Israel

sighed by reason of their hard Bondage, and God heard their groaning, and remembered his Covenant, which was to be a Friend to their Friends, and an Enemy to their Enemies; and God looked upon the Children of *Israel*. How, I pray, did he look? Why he had respect unto them, though their Enemies did nothing regard them, no not so much as a Man would regard his Beast. Again, God declares his Willingness in regard he commands his People to come to him, and call upon him in *the day of trouble*; and tells them withal, that unless they do thus, they are like to go without his help: For thus he tells his own People, *Ezek. 36. 37. I will for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them*; for God would not have his People to seek his face in vain. And in another place God complains, *Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, Isa. 43. 21.* You know if a Man be not willing to help, if he have power, yet if he have no mind to help, a poor Creature cannot with any face go to him: but God is so far from discouraging any from coming to him, that he invites them to come, and assures them that if they come, *he will in no wise cast them out*: And indeed commands them for to come, and commands Silence in Heaven till his People tell their Tale; and

and doth bow down his Ear to hear what his People can say for themselves, and as a Parent to his Child, O! *what wouldst thou have?*

If God were not willing to help, he would say, as he did to the Wicked, *Psal. 50. 16. What hast thou to do?* With my Word you shall not take my Name in your Mouth; or if you do, it shall be in vain; if you make many Prayers, I will not hear you. But he readily grants the Requests of his People; O! says the Prophet, *he will be very gracious to thee at the Voice of thy Cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee, Isa. 30. 19.* So no sooner did Daniel, *10. 12.* let himself to seek God, but his words were heard: So when we seek God by Prayer, as we ought to do, God will send Mercy post haste to his People: Now would he doth us, if he were not willing to help them, and to be a Stronghold to them.

4thly. If you would trust in God aright, you must clear up your Interest in God; That this God that is thus able and willing to help and defend, is your God; That you can claim an Interest in him, and that you are his; That he knows you to be his Friends and Acquaintance by your often coming to him, and that you know him to be your Father in

Christ : You will never come to close with God with any Confidence, when you come to have need of him, unless you can clear up your Interest in him ; otherwise here will be apt to come in dismaying Thoughts. I know indeed that God can save me, and can defend me ; but can I say, upon good grounds, as the Prophet did, *I am thine, save me ?* I have so often sinn'd against him, that I have great cause to question whether this God be my God ; this will turn back the Milk in the Breast of the Promise : The Scripture doth wonderfully declare this, as in the *Psalms* 48. ult. *This God is our God* : as if no others had any interest in him : And so *Psal.* 67. 6. *God even our own God shall bless us* ; and so *Isa.* 25. 9. *Lo, this God is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us ; we will rejoice, and be glad in his Salvation.* This was that stay'd their Minds up, and kept them from despair ; and so this was that kept up the Spirits of those three Worthies, *Dan.* 3. 17. They first lay claim to God, and clear up their Interest in him, and then they conclude, *he will save us out of thine hand, O King* ; and so he did. So when there was such a mighty Army and great Multitude came out against *Jeboſaphat*, and against his People, what do they then

then but clear up their Interest in God? *Art not thou our God,* say they, *2 Chron.* 20. ver. 7. and then ver. 12. *O our God, wilt thou not judge them.* Which words are to be resolved affirmatively; *Thou being our God, wilt certainly judge them, and avenge our cause;* and so he did. So that when you have cleared up your Interest in God in a day of trouble, then set Faith on work without Fear; labour fully to rely upon God, and to trust in him: Be the Troubles as many, and as great as may be, yet believe that you have a God that is able to defend you, and to deliver you out of them all. Know this, that it is the unreasonablest thing in the World, after thou hast cleared up that thou hast a real Interest in God, to doubt that he will deliver thee, or take thy part, or be gracious to thee, when thou hast made out to thy self that thou hast an Interest in him. Would it not be an unnatural thing for a Child that hath had Experience of his Father's Kindness to him, and ready to relieve any that hath come to him when they have been in distress, now for this Child to doubt of his Help? and to say, If I were in want, would my Father relieve? If I were pursued by an Enemy to my Father's Door, would he receive me? Were I in the Water ready to be drowned,

drowned, would he help me out? Or were I fallen in the Fire, would my Father pluck me out? Surely if thou canst find upon good grounds, that God is thy God, and thy Father in Christ, and taken possession of thy Soul, would it be a seemly thing for thee to reason thus? If I were poor or despised in the World, would God own me or know me? Yes, if you own and acknowledg him to be your God. Doth not the Text say, that *he knows them that trust in him*? be they never so poor or mean in the World. We read of Believers in *Heb. 11. 37.* how *they wandered about in sheeps-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented*; and yet it is said in the same Chapter, at *ver. 16.* *God is not ashamed to be called their God*: For they are the Poor chiefly that put their Trust in God, that have nothing else to trust too; so *Zeph. 3. 12.* *I will leave in the midst of thee a poor People, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.* And the Widow being desolate, saith the Apostle, *1 Tim. 5. 5.* *trusteth in God*: Before, whilst she had a Husband, she relyed on him; but being desolate, and having none to regard her, or to provide for her, she trusts in God, and God knows all them that trust in him, be they never so poor; it is not Poverty shall part God and a Believer: As it is storied

storied of Mr. Fox, that wrote the Book
 of Martyrs; being asked, Whether he did
 not know such as were but poor in Estate
 and mean in Person, but godly in their
 Lives and Conversations? O! says he, *I*
forget Lords and Ladies to remember such:
 So God, though he be High, yet hath he
 respect to the Lowly; the most High hath
 most respect to the most Low, and over-
 looks the Proud and Stately; and though
 he sits upon a most high Throne, yet doth
 he look with a Look of Favour and Love
 to him that is poor, *and of a contrite Spi-*
rit, and that trembles at, and trusts in
 his Word; and therefore away these
 Doubts: If I be poor, will God own me;
 Or if I be in streights, will he relieve
 me? Or if I be in danger, will he be a
 Strong-hold, or a Place of Refuge to me?
 Away with all these If's and Doubts;
 set thy Faith on work, and fall flatly to
 believing. Thus did the Father of the
 Faithful, setting Faith on work without
 Fear, and staying himself on God, as ma-
 king a Promise, and afterwards as break-
 ing a Promise; who first upon a Promise
 gave him a Son, and afterwards bids him
go and offer up thy Son, Gen. 22. kill him,
 slay him with thine own hands. Now if
 you look into Gen. 17. there is made out
 to Abraham the Interest that he had in
 G God;

God; and God tells him there, *I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.* Well, now when God had made out to *Abraham* his Interest, he puts him upon Streights and great Trials; and this hottest Trial of all, the offering up of his only Son by *Sarah*, his dearly beloved Wife: Well, thought *Abraham*, if I must do it, surely God will do me good by it, as his Grandson *Jacob* said in another case. What did *Abraham*, when his Interest that he had in God was made out to him, but falls to flat believing? Says the Apostle, *Rom. 4. 20. He staggered not.* For he that was able to raise his Son from the dead, as well as he could make the barren Womb of *Sarah* for to bear, and to bring him forth; O! is a Consideration of great worth. If you can once find upon Scripture-grounds, that God is your God, (but take heed, I pray you of false and deceitful grounds;) you may be sure God will stay up your Hearts in any distress. If you are his, and rely wholly upon him, you have both God's hand and seal to do you good. Consider *David*, how in his Troubles he fell to believing; and you know what great Troubles he passed through, greater than ever *Saul* had when he had his Interest cleared up in God: And whatsoever his Trou-
bles

bles were, he set Faith on work; he bids Faith fall on, and fear not: Though Troubles were on this side, and on that side, nay round about, yet see how bluntly he falls on, *Psal. 25. 2. O, my God, I trust in thee, I trust in thee:* I know I have many and mighty Adversaries, but I rely only upon thee, do thou consider which way thou wilt rid me of them, and bring me out of my Trouble. He did not say, Will the Lord, or will God help me? and will the Lord be found of me? He did not stagger thus, but he bids Faith fall on; *O, my God, I trust in thee, I will not fear what Man can do unto me.* Beloved, it is an excellent thing, not, when Troubles come, to stand as a People amazed; but let Faith lay hold on God as a God Al-sufficient. Tell God with Reverence, you will commit all to him: As a Duke, being about to make War with a Bishop, before he engaged in the War he sends out a Spy to take notice what the Bishop said, and how he behaved himself. Who returning, the Duke askt him, What the Bishop was doing, and how he behaved himself? Says he, the Bishop seems to be very careless; he says, He will preach the Word, and feed his Flock, and *totius belli molem deo Ommittet.* I, says the Duke, says he so, *Tunc ei bellum inferat Diabolus*

non Ego; Then let the Devil make War with him for me. Thus Faith will direct all your Affairs to God; and having so done, hence will arise abundance of sweet Peace and Quiet in your Minds. The reason of all the Disquiet that is at any time on the Spirits of God's People, especially in days of Trouble, is because they cannot trust God, and stay their Minds on him: They cannot believe, and that makes the poor Soul to toss and tumble up and down; they are afflicted with this fear and that fear. What says the Prophet, *Isa. 7. 9. If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established*: God will be found to be faithful if you would trust in him, and rely upon him: Faith, it will set you upon the Rock that is higher than your selves, higher than any, nay than all your Adversaries; so that when the Winds blow, and the Storms beat, and the Waves roar and rage against a Rock that stands firm and stedfast in the midst of the Sea, against which, as Adversaries, the Waves foam and spit, and split themselves with rage; yet he on such a Rock sits and laughs, and remaineth safe. A notable Instance we have in *Matth. 14.* of the Condition of such a one as doth believe. Our Saviour would there teach us by Example what trusting in
God

God will do, and how when our Faith fails, then we shall fail our selves. In that Chapter you have how there, they were at Sea : Now Christ that could trust his Father, and stay his Mind upon God, he needs no Ship as the Disciples did, to keep him from drowning ; he could walk on the Sea, as you may see he did *ver. 25.* yet doubtless then the Waves did toss about Christ, so that he must needs be, in appearance, in a dangerous Condition : Yet Christ he could stay his Mind on God, his Faith kept him up that he could not sink : But now they that were in the Ship not knowing who this was, cried out : *Why*, says Christ to them, *it is I, be not afraid.* He set out before them a most glorious Instance of what Faith could do, in his walking upon the Water. Now Peter that had something of this Grace wrought in him by the Power of God, says he to Christ, *Lord, if it be thou, bid me to come to thee on the Water :* *Why come*, says Christ ; so Peter came down, and walked on the Water to go to Christ, but at length he began to sink. Mark, so long as his Faith kept firm, his Feet kept firm, and he was able to walk upon the Water ; the Water was as a Floor under him ; but now mark, his Trust began to fail on a sudden, as Faith will many times ebb and flow in a moment. Now as his

Faith began to sink, his Feet began to sink, for he had some Faith, though it was but little: Mark therefore how clearly this is made out; for when he saw the Wind boisterous, *ver. 30.* Why did he not see it so when he was in the Ship? Yes, doubtless it was, as you may find *ver. 24.* but then he had a believing sight of Christ; but now his Faith that began to grow weak, and to sink within him; but immediately Christ put forth his Hand, and caught him, and said, *O, thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* So ready is Christ to succour such as have any, though but a weak Faith: as if Christ had said, I confess thou wert in a place of great danger, the Sea wide, and the Winds high, and the Waves boisterous, but yet if thou couldst have believed, thou shouldest have done well enough; the Little-ness of thy Faith, it was that that made thee sink: So that you see how ready God is to relieve Faith, though it be but little; for which I may give you many Reasons, I will name but two.

First, Because this is a Grace that is so much despised by the Men of the World, and are apt to upbraid those that place their Trust in God, as we have an Instance of this in Christ himself; *O say they, Mat. 27. 43. he trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him:* And so the Apostle

Paul

Paul speaks of himself, and others the Servants of God, *1 Tim. 4. 10. For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God; so likewise Psal. 14. 6.*

Secondly, Because by trusting in God, the Poor commit themselves to God when they have nothing else to trust to, as the Widow being desolate, says the Apostle, *1 Tim. 5. 5. trusts in God; and so Zeph. 3. 12. I will leave in the midst of thee a poor People, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord: Though they be poor, and never so mean, yet if they trust in God, he will never leave them nor forsake them.*

F I N I S.

